

# Breastfeeding: Shame if you do, shame if you don't

November 4 2014

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Image: Wikipedia.

A new study of 63 women with varied infant feeding experiences reveals that breastfeeding mothers may feel shame if they breastfeed in public due to exposure, while those who do not breastfeed may experience shame through 'failing' to give their infant the 'best start.'

Breastfeeding and non-breastfeeding mothers may also experience [shame](#) through inadequate support, [judgment](#), and condemnation, leading to feelings of failure, inadequacy, and isolation.

"This study highlights the difficulties and tensions that breastfeeding and

non-breastfeeding women can face in hospital and community settings. It emphasizes the need for person centered, individualized support to be available to women, irrespective of how they feed their infant, as well as focused efforts to address cultural and structural constraints associated with [infant feeding](#)," said Dr. Gill Thomson, lead author of the *Maternal & Child Nutrition* study.

**More information:** Thomson, G., Ebisch-Burton, K. and Flacking, R. (2014), Shame if you do – shame if you don't: women's experiences of infant feeding. *Maternal & Child Nutrition*. [DOI: 10.1111/mcn.12148](https://doi.org/10.1111/mcn.12148)

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